



MONTANA FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

THE **OUTSIDE** IS IN US ALL.

Meeting Date: February 13, 2020

Agenda Item: Madison River Recreation Scoping Survey Results

Action Needed: Informational

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 15 minutes

Background: The Fish and Wildlife Commission received three petitions in the fall of 2019 to initiate rule-making with respect to recreational use of the Madison River. At the November 2019 meeting, the commission voted to deny the petitions and directed the department to conduct a public scoping process that included alternatives proposed in the petitions. The department was instructed to provide results of the survey to the commission at the February 2020 meeting.

Public Involvement Process & Results: The department conducted an online survey using Survey Monkey from Nov. 26 to Jan. 6, and also provided an online mailbox for people to provide additional comments about Madison River recreation. A total of 7,605 people took the survey, and about 260 comments were provided to the online mailbox. In addition, there were 265 people who submitted a pre-printed postcard with specific recommendations. Approximately 69 percent of survey respondents were residents, and 31 percent were non-residents. Four hundred respondents identified themselves as commercial outfitters or guides, and 188 of these were also Madison River Special Recreation Permit (SRP) holders.

Alternatives and Analysis: The online survey asked for the public's opinion on recreation management within four broad topics: Commercial Fishing Outfitter Management, Social Conflict Management on the Upper River, Lower River Recreational Use Management, and Angler Use Management on the Upper River. Each of these topics proposed four or five alternatives for management, and the respondent was asked to grade each alternative on a scale from 1 to 5—very unacceptable ranging to very acceptable. The survey also proposed a Management Goal for the river, and asked respondents their opinion on three main components of the goal. A compilation of the survey results will be made available for commissioners and the public.

Proposed Motion:

No action is proposed to be taken.